

We Are Not Afraid ~ March to support the victims of terrorism.

To Westminster for a march called at short notice as members of the EDL wanted to show their support for the victims of terrorism, following the vehicle and knife attack on Westminster Bridge last week.

Coming out of Westminster Underground station our first task was to thoughtfully visit the flowers and tributes on the bridge and around the Houses of Parliament.





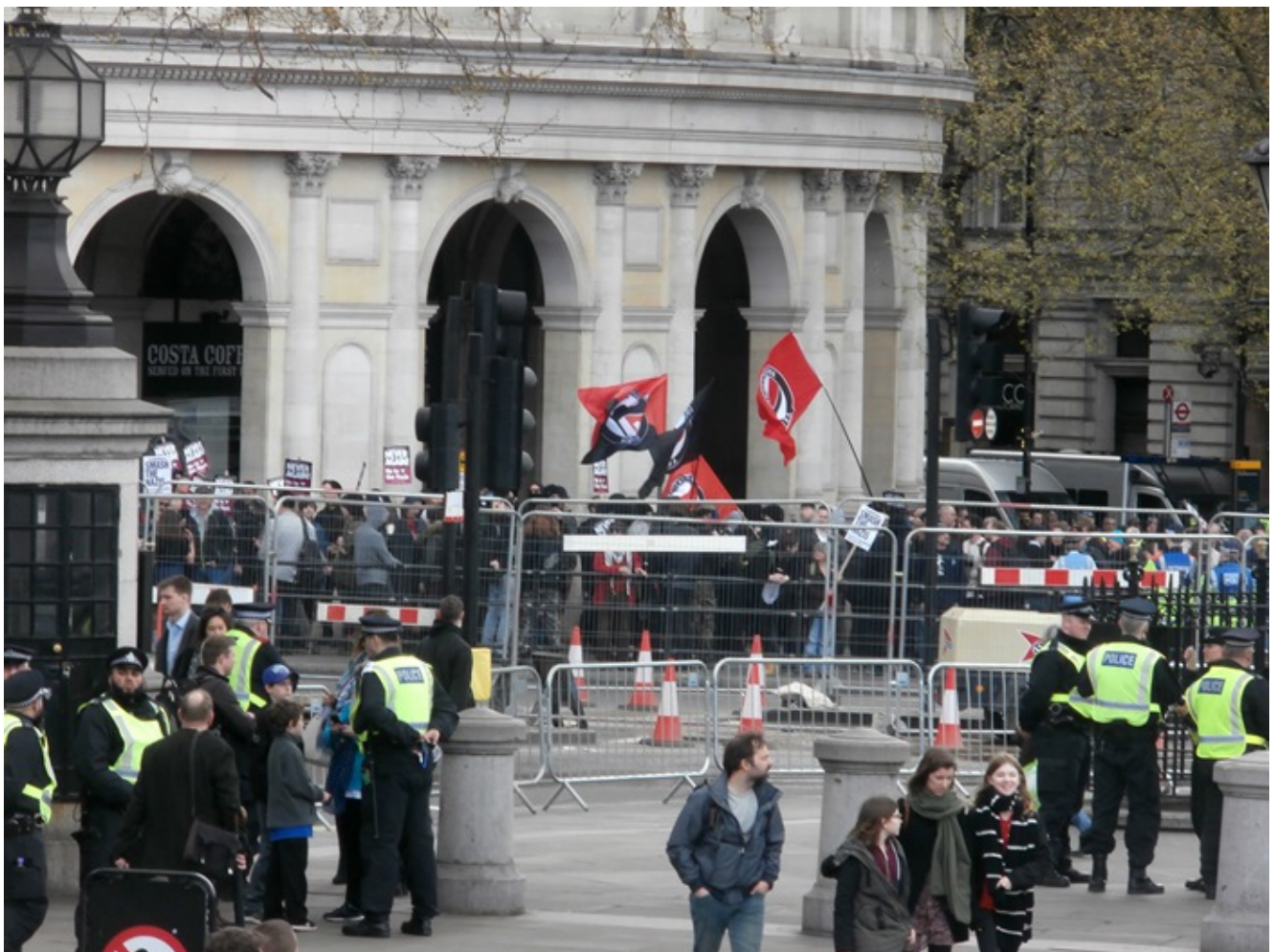
#LOVE MUSLIMS
HATE ISLAM
TIME FOR TRUTH!

This man was, so far as I know, nothing to do with the march. I believe him to be acting as an individual; but his poster sums up what many of us feel. Muslims, as human beings are God's children as we all are. But it is the ideology of Islam which is hateful, and we are against that, and the hateful things the ideology produces.

Britain First had also called a similar rally for this afternoon. Knowing that the Metropolitan Police had directed that both groups were to hold their rallies on Victoria Embankment which runs north from Westminster Bridge we decided to walk along and inspect the rally site(s). We passed the offices of New Scotland Yard where beautiful tributes to PC Keith Palmer who was stabbed at the gates of Parliament were laid out.



And then up Horseguards Avenue by the side of the MOD building to Whitehall and into Trafalgar Square where we knew the EDL were meeting. Unfortunately the rallies were to be opposed on principle by the UAF, Hope not Hate, Antifa and fellow travellers. They announced their intention to meet outside South Africa House which is on Trafalgar Square. On the day the pavement outside was dug up for repairs so the police corralled them on the pavement outside Waterstones bookshop. We watched them unpack their mass produced placards, flyers saying 'Stop Le Pen' and the usual copies of Socialist Worker. Small groups, faces covered, carrying red and or black flags were arriving under police escort every minute.



Members of the EDL were also starting to arrive.





A small detachment of Antifa decided to wander casually across Trafalgar Square, waving their internationale flag. But the police were wise to them and stopped them by the National Gallery.

We knew that Britain First were meeting at Charing Cross station which is about 150 yards off Trafalgar Square so we decided to have a look to see how they were getting on. Charing Cross was quiet and calm and when we got back into Trafalgar Square the EDL were elsewhere. We found out later that more Antifa got past the police into the square, and so



the police moved the EDL away and into the nearby pub where some members were finishing their lunch before joining the muster. Meanwhile we could hear Antifa outside the bookshop being vociferous on the subject of Nazi scum, clearance off the streets of, and decided to return to the rally areas on Victoria Embankment. Where very shortly Antifa and friends were, reluctantly, escorted.

They did not want to go into the rally area. At first they refused to enter. They stopped on the corner and speeches were made. The police blocked their potential routes elsewhere and eventually they entered the area set aside for them.







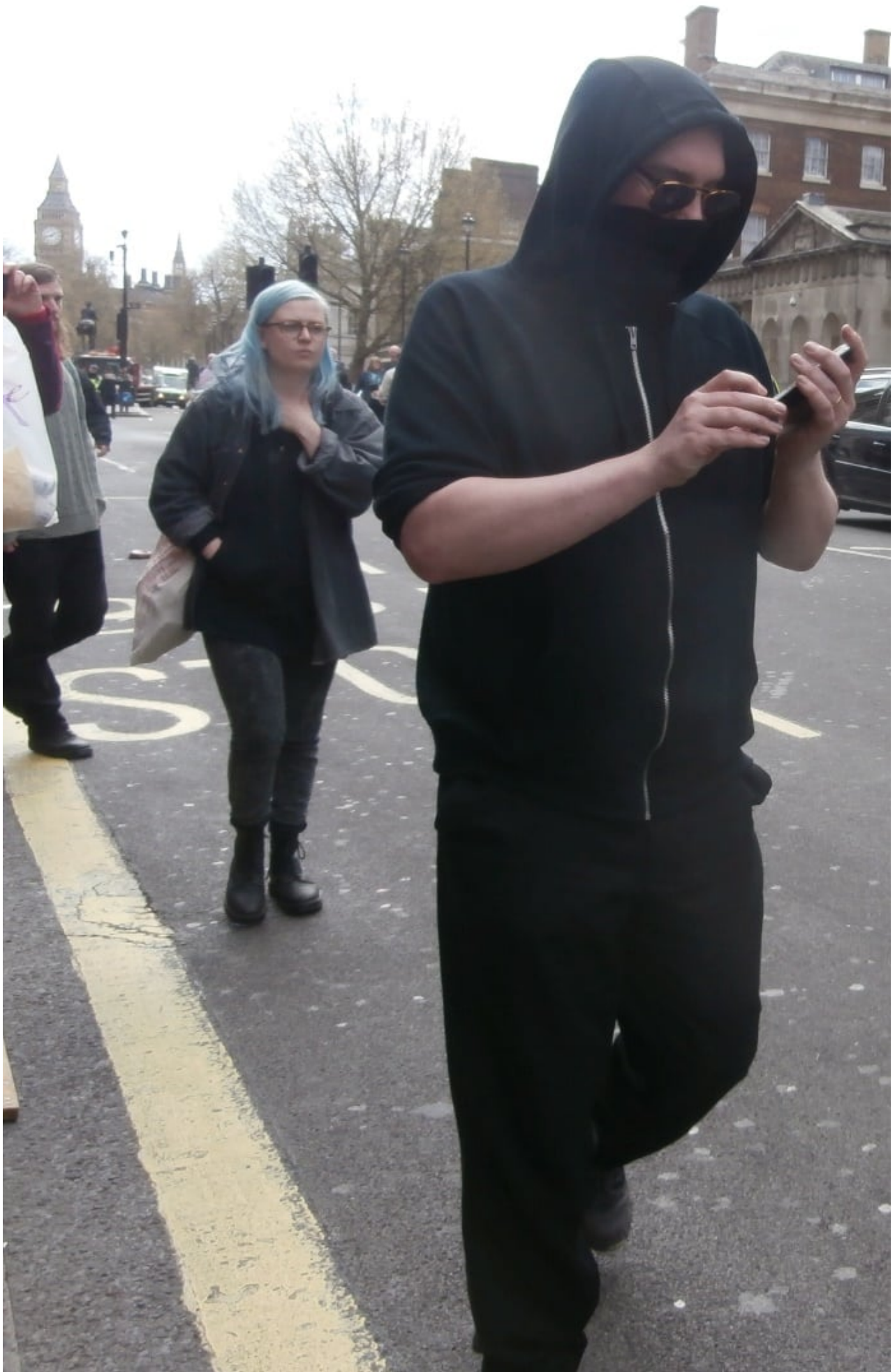
Having found out from a police officer that the EDL would be marching up Whitehall shortly, and that their area was further along Victoria Embankment (its a long road) we returned to Whitehall.

Quite a lot of Antifa (those not specifically identified by the carrying of a flag, but still recognisable by their black clothing and covered faces) were still milling about.

We could see the police outside the pub and realised where the EDL were. The march therefore left from Public House premises and I do wonder if that was done by the authorities deliberately to give an unfavourable impression to any onlookers.



I hear a familiar cry of Alerta, Alerta, Antifascista. Seriously, this is not Catalonia, it is not 1936 and that young woman with the blue hair is not La Pasionaria; you are living in the wrong book. In any event George Orwell warned us about people like you.



scuffle, a scrimmage, and a few minutes later he came back the other way looking less sure of himself.





He wasn't the only one either. The newspapers give a figure of either 12 or 14 arrests. The headlines are what you would expect. For example local newspaper get West London says [Walthamstow in 2015;](#) a preponderance of Hispanic and Italian accents.

The chant went Oo protecta da Nazis? Da police protecta da Nazis....

However the police were protecting the EDL march so well we couldn't get near them. We heard them go down Northumberland Avenue, and could see the flags over the cordon of police vans, but the officers turned us back 'Sorry, Sir, its closed, you and your wife will have to go the other way'

After trying every avenue (and Place, Street and Yard – all blocked by vans and rows of police officers) we had to go across the northern footpath of Hungerford Bridge (there are footpaths both sides of the railway line into Charing Cross Station) to the South bank, under the bridge, up onto the southern footpath and back again, where we could observe all three rallies, albeit at a distance. Antifa at the far end, EDL and BF adjacent to each other at the nearer end.



Too far away to hear anything, although I am told that the EDL speaker was excellent. Tommy Robinson was about filming with Rebel Media the Canadian news website. I didn't see him.

The EDL moved off first in good order.



Britain First continued with their speeches.



We couldn't get off the footbridge at the Victoria Embankment end, and rather than wait we returned to the Southbank and tea. Hot sweet tea...

Photographs E Weatherwax and husband, London April 2017